

## Early History of Sheep Industry in Wasatch County *Cooperative Sheep Herd*

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HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS

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Food had been the most important crop for the early settlers, and as they established gardens and cultivated fields they also introduced stock raising into the valley. Because of the heavy snows that fell during the winters, there were numerous mountain streams and springs and an abundance of meadow-lands. Some wondered if the summer season would be long enough to make stock raising a sound economic possibility, but others reasoned that they could never know until they tried it, so several people brought small flocks of sheep and cattle into the valley in 1860.

President Brigham Young called John M. Murdoch, a shepherd from Scotland and a convert to the Church, to supervise a herd of sheep for the Church. However, by the time he arrived in Utah the sheep had been sold, so Mr. Murdoch came to Heber in 1860 and pioneered co-operative herding. Those who had sheep banded them together in the co-op herd and Mr. Murdoch took charge of them on range-lands in the summer and on southern ranches in the winter. The venture proved very successful, and families who before had been unable to care for sheep now found it possible to own a herd. As people developed their own individual herds, however, the co-op idea soon dwindled. Some of the first sheep owners were the Jacob brothers, Lindsay brothers, Murdocks, Clydes, Clotworthy, Coleman, Austin, Smith, Jessop Thomas and the Fitzgeralds.

The sheep industry grew substantially over the years, and at one time there were more milk fed lambs shipped out of Heber than from any other point in the United States.

The cattle industry grew also, supplying at first the needs of those in the valley and eventually providing beef and other meat products for shipment to Denver and many eastern cities. Some of the major owners of cattle included A. M. Murdock, J. W. Clyde, John Carroll, William Averett and sons, John Witt and sons, the Carliles, Giles, Cummings and Abram Hatch and Sons.

# JOHN MURRAY MURDOCH AND HIS WIVES, ANN STEELE AND ISABELLA CROWFORD

John Murray Murdoch was born December 28, 1821, in Gaswater Ayrshire, Scotland, son of James and Mary Murray Murdoch. When he was 10 years old his father lost his life when he entered a gas-filled mine to rescue a fellow worker, thus leaving the mother with seven children to support. At an early age, John went to work as a shepherd boy, roaming the purple heathery hills of his homeland.

He met Ann Steele, a Scotch lassie living at Kirkconnell, a nearby village. A pleasant courtship ensued and they were married February 24, 1848. Shortly after their marriage, James Steele, a brother of



Ann's, came to visit them and told of a new religion he had joined while in England known as The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. His testimony impressed them so much that two years later, when the two Mormon missionaries came to their home, they were soon converted and were baptized November 29, 1850. After embracing this strange new religion, their kinfolk and friends turned against them and they longed to emigrate to Zion.

Brigham Young had asked Franklin D. Richards to send two Scotch shepherds to Utah. He contacted John, and shortly after, John, with his wife and two children, set sail on the ship "Kennebec." The ship sailed from Liverpool, England, January 1, 1852. They always felt it was through the hand of Providence that this opportunity to get to Utah came to them.

After a dangerous voyage of nine weeks, they arrived in New Orleans. There they chartered a steamboat up the Mississippi River. A 10-day delay on a sandbar decreased their food rations to a dangerously low level, and their two sweet children, because of undernourishment, were taken very ill and died. A month later this weary, childless couple were blessed with a baby girl. When the baby was but 10 days old they began their trek across the plains.

Many weeks of hardships and trials brought them to the promised valley. They came with the Abraham Smoot company, Brigham Young and others, accompanied by Pitt's Brass Band, gave the weary travelers a hearty welcome. Permission was granted them to stay in the fort until a cabin could be built.

With undaunted faith and courage, this young couple gradually gathered a little around them. After living in Salt Lake Valley for eight years they loaded all their possessions into a wagon pulled by teams and, with their four little daughters, moved to upper Provo Valley, now known as Heber Valley. This was in the spring of 1860. They lived in the fort and their first home was a dugout. That fall, on November 7, another little girl came to bless their home.

It covers a long story to say that they did their part, and did it well in every enterprise in Wasatch County.

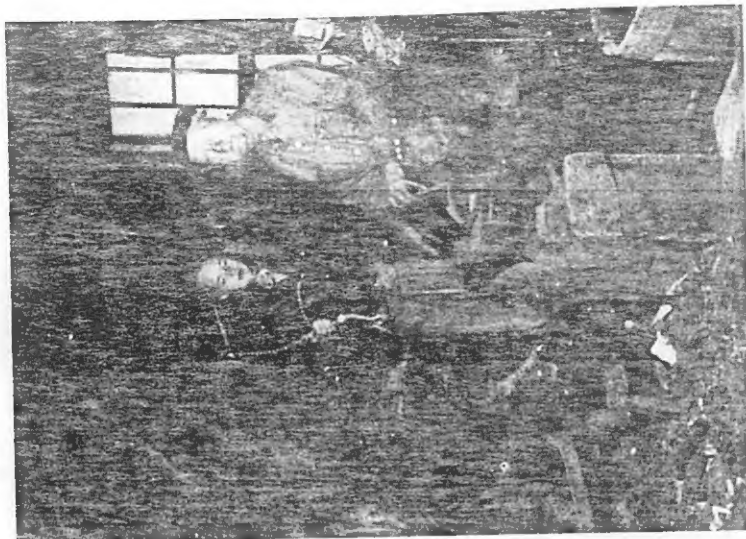
On August 8, 1862, John took as his plural wife a beautiful dark-eyed Scotch lass by the name of Isabella Crowford, a native of Blantyre, Scotland. As a young woman, she emigrated to America and worked in the cotton mills at Holyoke, Massachusetts, to get money to come to Utah. She, too, had left her loved ones and her all for the Gospel's sake. She never saw or heard of her family again after being driven from her home when she joined the Church.

Isabella proved to be a kind and faithful wife and was the mother of seven children. Ann was the mother of 15 children, making a family of 22. Fifteen grew to maturity in this valley. One member of this family, James C. Murdoch, who observed his ninetieth birthday February 11, 1959, and his faithful wife, Sarah Giles, are still with us, beloved and respected pioneers of our valley.

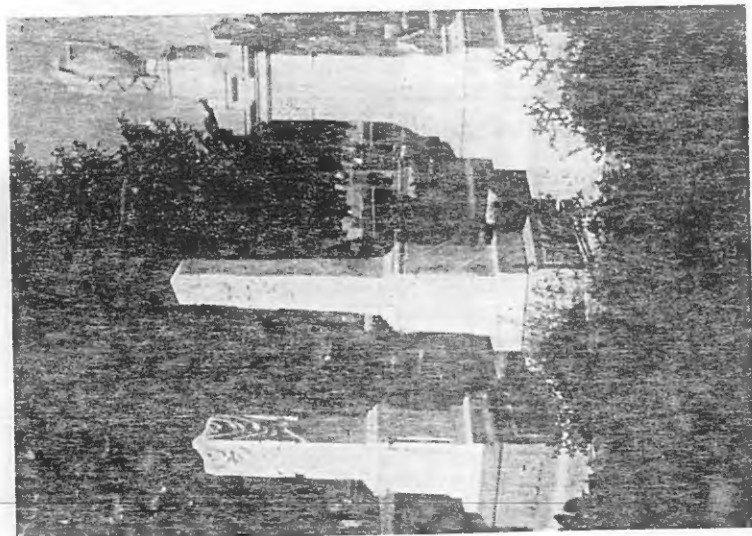
John M. Murdoch was the first recorder of Wasatch County. He was second counselor to William Wall, the first presiding Elder of the valley. He was captain in the Blackhawk War, president of the High Priests' Quorum, and in 1899 was ordained a Patriarch of Wasatch Stake. He was noted for his kind, comforting words and actions to those in need. He lived long and well, and at the age of 90 passed away

beloved and honored. Each of his wives lived to be 80 years of age and, like their honored husband, was loved by everyone.





Blacksmith shop built about 1865—still in use. Built by Daniel Mc Millan. Now owned by William Johnston.



Products of Early Marble Industry

Money from this railroad activity provided the foundation for another of the permanent businesses in the county—that of Mark Jeffs. Richard Jeffs, Mark's father, was a Mormon convert from England who came to Utah in 1862, bringing Mark with him. Their first home in Heber was a small log cabin owned by Elizabeth Carlyle and situated on her pasture lot.<sup>6</sup> It was in this cabin that Mark first began trading. His year's work on the railroad in 1868-69 enabled him to save seventy dollars, which he soon took to Salt Lake City and invested in goods such as calico, factory, sugar, and tea. Once home in Heber he set up his store in the little log cabin. The scales for weighing out sugar and tea were set in the window. Calico and factory were measured out on the

<sup>6</sup>Statement by Emma Wherritt, personal interview, 1952.



Joseph Hatch



Joseph R. Murdock

bed, and a chair served as a rude counter for tying up the articles.<sup>7</sup>

The cabin that housed his business may have been crude, but the mind that directed the trade was vigorous and keen. As business increased he bought property on Main Street. When this seemed inadequate he rented the large rock store which had previously housed Judge Carter's business. He enlarged again and again. The purchase of more property, erection of buildings, and further enlargement all prefaced the establishment of the Heber Mercantile Company in 1905 with a capital stock of fifteen thousand dollars.<sup>8</sup>

#### THE COOPERATIVES

The cooperative mercantile movement in Utah, which affected the Wasatch County business scene, really began

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup>*Wasatch Wave*, December 21, 1906.

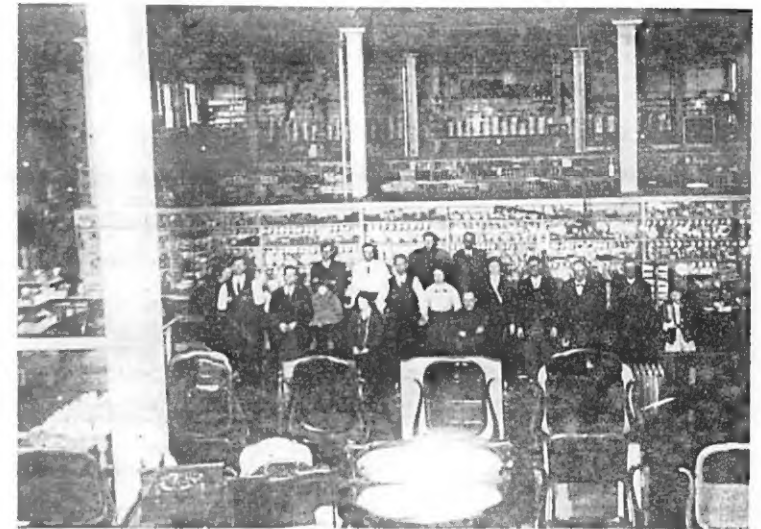


Daybell Millinery in Charleston

in Salt Lake City in 1868. High prices and less prosperous times prompted Brigham Young and prominent Mormon leaders to introduce the cooperatives in an attempt to secure social and economic justice.<sup>9</sup> As it was conceived, the plan called for any group of Church members to pool their capital to form a corporation. This corporation then issued shares of stock in a store, and those who held the shares divided the profits on the basis of the amount of stock each held.

In Wasatch County the motives for adopting the cooperative plan seemed to be a desire to organize sufficient capital for the beginning of business and its expan-

<sup>9</sup>Neff, *op. cit.*, p. 830.



Heber Mercantile

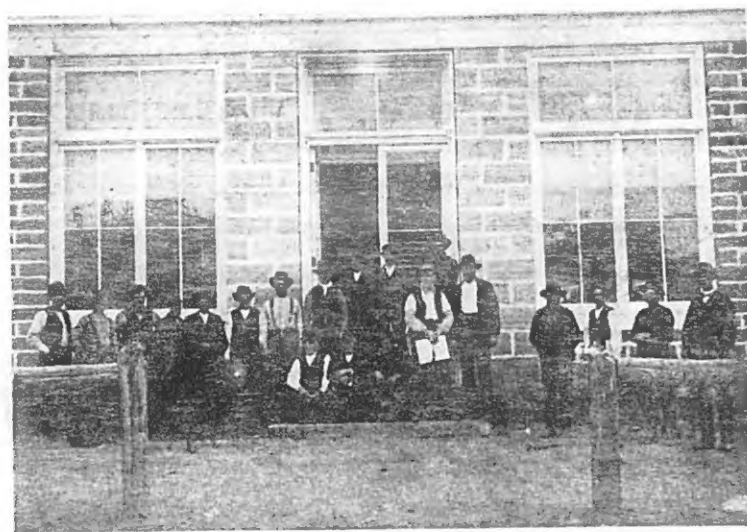
Clerks of Heber Mercantile: E. J. Duke, Robert Duke, A. Y. Duke, Cleone Cord, Nymphus Murdock, Cora Miller, Jay Jensen, Jr., Edward McMullin, George Pyper, Lacy B. Duke, Jos. A. Rasband, manager, and Jos. E. D. Tomilson.



sion rather than a desire to alleviate hardship caused by exorbitant prices. Thus it was that Abram Hatch and John W. Witt, both merchants at the beginning of the cooperative period, pooled their stock into a larger store and called it the Heber Co-op. This business was carried on in the south room of President Hatch's home on Main Street.

Both Midway and Charleston were scenes of similar ventures. In Midway the co-op was directed by David Van Wagonen and in Charleston by Nymphas C. Murdock.

The story of the Charleston Co-op is an interesting



A. Hatch & Co.

Front of A Hatch & Co.; Standing: James McNaughton, John Bell, James Murdock, Chas. Shelton, William Brett, Thomas Clothworthy, Heber Rasband, Barney Riley, Ludwig Anderson, Joseph Hatch, Sr., Joseph Hatch, Jr., John Witt, Isaac (Babe) Cummings, Bishop Henry Clegg, Alex Fortie, Thomas Watson, Dr. Glanville. Sitting: Heber Crook, Brigham Witt, James Rasband.

and, in some details, romantic illustration of this type of mercantile trade. The store began in a large drygoods box in Nymphas C. Murdock's kitchen.<sup>10</sup> Murdock, one of the early valley settlers, and the first bishop of Charleston Ward, settled on a ranch about one and one-half miles south of the present Charleston townsite. In 1873, he and five or six neighbors formed a partnership to establish a merchandise store. The amount originally subscribed was fifty dollars' worth of grain which had to be sold before the goods with which to stock the store were purchased.<sup>11</sup> The business was carried on in the kitchen of the bishop's ranch for twelve years until 1885 when a site in the central part of Charleston was selected and here the store was built. In 1890 the Charleston Co-op was incorporated with a capital stock of ten thousand dollars divided into two thousand shares of five dollars each.

In the new locality the Charleston Co-op grew into a county institution. A creamery and lumber mill were established in connection with it. Business headquarters for the milling and creamery business were at the store, and this meant that those who logged lumber and sold milk ran accounts at the Co-op.<sup>12</sup> Even school was held in the upstairs room by Mrs. Ellen Baker, who had come from American Fork.

The store's large stock of merchandise included hardware; paint and oil; glass; wallpaper; furniture, machinery; stocks of shoes for men, women, and children; dry goods and notions; ladies' and children's dresses; men's overalls and work shirts; drugs; groceries and household goods.<sup>13</sup> In time trade grew so large that three additional sections were added to the original building.

<sup>10</sup>Edith North, "Business in Charleston," MSS, (Daughters of the Utah Pioneers Historical Collection, Heber City, 1952), p. 1.

<sup>11</sup>Wasatch Wave, December 21, 1906, p. 12.

<sup>12</sup>James Ritchie, "Charleston," MSS, (Daughters of the Utah Pioneers Historical Collection, Heber City, 1952), p. 1.

<sup>13</sup>North, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

With the advent of the railroad the Charleston Co-op weighed and shipped sugar beets to the Lehi sugar factory and hay to the Utah market. The store itself was always a ready market for the farmer's other produce such as grain, butter, and eggs.

A good deal of personal history connected with the store could even be found on the back of the sliding door of one of the large showcases. Here were carved the names dates, and romances of the clerks.

The Co-op was later sold to George W. Daybell and Sons and eventually to William H. North of Charleston. When the Deer Creek Reservoir was built many of the Charleston families had to give up their lands and homes. The railroad and highway were moved from the town and the Charleston Co-op became only a memory.

The 1870's saw the successful development of both cooperative and individual merchandising businesses. In addition to those already described many others later opened stores. These included the Lindsay Brothers, William McMillin and Henry Alexander, the Rasband Brothers, Duncan's Variety Store, F. O. Buell, Turner and Sons, Roger's Notions and Varieties, and Clegg and Son's. In 1889 the first drug store opened in Heber under the management of a Mr. Bridge.<sup>14</sup>

Advertisements in the *Wasatch Wave* in 1889 offer a rather nostalgic picture of business at the close of the period covered by this history. A visitor to the county, possibly a salesman (then called a drummer), could come in on the Heber and Park City Stage Line. The stage carried both freight and passengers and left Heber daily at 8:00 a.m. and Park City at 3:00 p.m. Good accommodations could be had at either the Duncan House or the Heber House, run by Mrs. Henry McMullin. Lunch at William Hannah's Heber City Bakery would be a staggering five to ten cents. A cloth salesman might call on

<sup>14</sup>*Wasatch Wave*, December 14, 1889.

Sadie Zitting, a professional dressmaker, or V. R. Berglin, the tailor who was offering suits made to order from eight dollars up. A little liquid refreshment could be had at either the Heber or Wasatch Saloons, which also offered pure alcohol for medicinal purposes. Traveling around the towns of the county one could find one or more general stores, blacksmith shops, or meat markets that by now had become permanently established.

Pioneer trades shared importance with merchandising in the successful establishment of the Wasatch Communities. Among the settlers were many skilled artisans who upon arrival in Utah were delegated by the Church to duties in the new towns and cities in much the same manner as were church officials.

Blacksmithing was a trade of importance and long duration. Blacksmiths shod the horses and oxen, made yokes for the teams, and repaired wagons and farm implements. In Wasatch John Davison was the first blacksmith. His shop in the Fort in Heber was equipped with tools which he himself had made from scrap iron.<sup>15</sup>

Other trades familiar to the pioneer scene were harness makers, tanners, weavers, dressmakers, cobblers, and fur trappers. Many women engaged in business also, often making and selling hats woven from the local straw or baking or cooking.

<sup>15</sup>Ethyl Johnson, "Blacksmithing in Wasatch County," MSS, (Daughters of Utah Pioneers Historical Collection, Heber City, 1952), p. 1.



There were many varieties of building stone. Red sandstone was quarried from mountain ledges in the Lake Creek region by John Crook and William Forman. This stone was extensively used for homes and public buildings. The Stake tabernacle and County Courthouse were built of this material.

John Watkins of Midway was one of the most enterprising builders in the valley. Since he was from England, much of his building had characteristic English styling. He found a bed of white sandstone, from which he and his sons cut and sawed blocks for use in homes as corners, steps, and pillars. He also made hand pressed, sun-dried brick, and operated a lime kiln. There are many beautiful examples of his work in the valley today.<sup>1</sup>

A good supply of white marble was found in the Snake Creek region; and although it proved too soft to form a basis for permanent industry, it was utilized by the pioneers for tomb stones.

Pot rock, the porous limestone which covered much of the western side of the valley, found extensive application in building homes, fences, and public buildings.

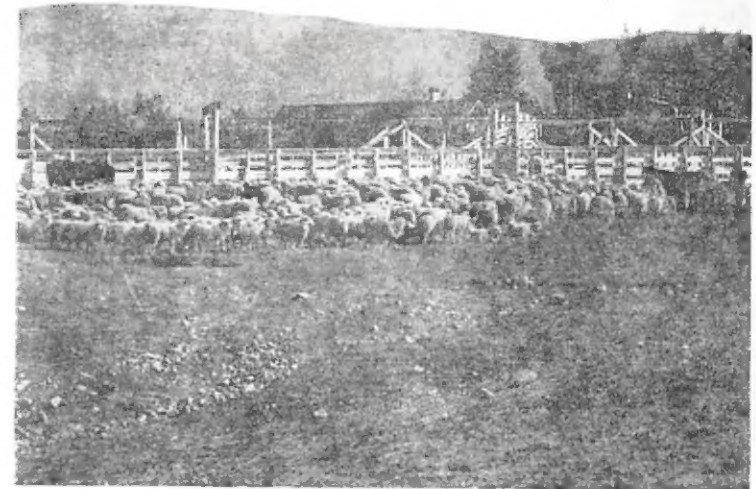
These pioneer industries served only until Wasatch County was effectively linked with larger Utah commercial centers by railroad and highway. Other industries that achieved permanent status were cattle raising, lumbering, and mining. It is these industries that contribute the greater part of the county's wealth and to which we must next turn our attention.

#### SHEEP AND CATTLE

Provo Valley in 1858 was the scene of ranch building and cattle grazing. An abundance of grass grew

<sup>1</sup>Mary A. Shaer, *A Brief History of the Pioneer John Watkins*, (Heber City, 1934), p. 69.

along the river banks and made an ideal grazing situation. Indeed, men like William Wall, Aaron Daniels, William Meeks, George Bean, and others felt the valley should be

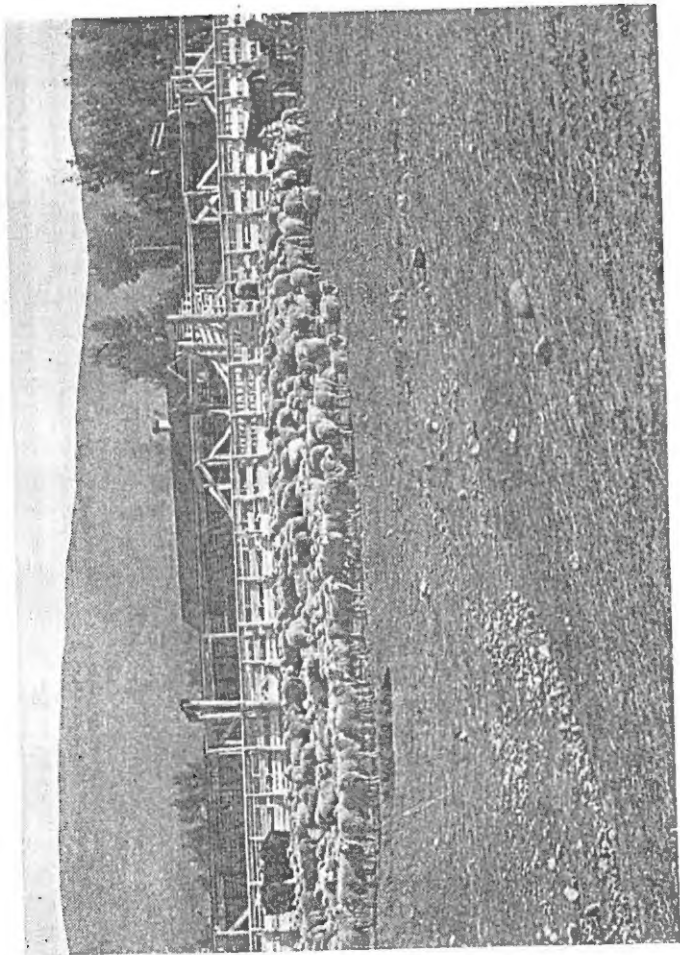


Sheep industry

set aside exclusively for cattle raising and lumbering.<sup>2</sup> Most of the later settlers were interested in tilling the soil, but they too took advantage of the rich grazing lands, and nearly all had a few sheep and cattle.

Raising sheep on a large scale began with the cooperative sheep herd organized by John M. Murdock in 1861. He was born in Grasswater, Anchimleck, Ayrshire, Scotland, on December 28, 1821. Much of his early life was spent as a shepherd boy. Later, while working in the coal mines, he became a convert to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In 1852

<sup>2</sup>Crook, "History of Wasatch County," *op. cit.*, p. 4.



Sheep industry



he left Scotland for Utah to fulfill a request of Brigham Young for two Scotch shepherds and their dogs; but Brigham's sheep died before John Murdock, his wife, and two children arrived in Utah. After living in Salt Lake City eight years, he moved to Heber in 1860. In 1861 he organized the settlers' sheep into a cooperative sheep herd and took charge of them for many years. He introduced the use of sheep dip in Utah and here built the first dipping vat for treating sheep for scab."

Commercial wool growing started in 1898 when Isaac and Milton Jacob, together with Joseph Jacob, their father, leased the cooperative sheep herd and ran it for four years. At the end of this period they bought out the interests of all who would sell and started their own herd of 3,000 sheep and thus became prominent leaders

<sup>2</sup>*Wasatch Wave*, December 21, 1906, p. 9.



Beef cattle industry

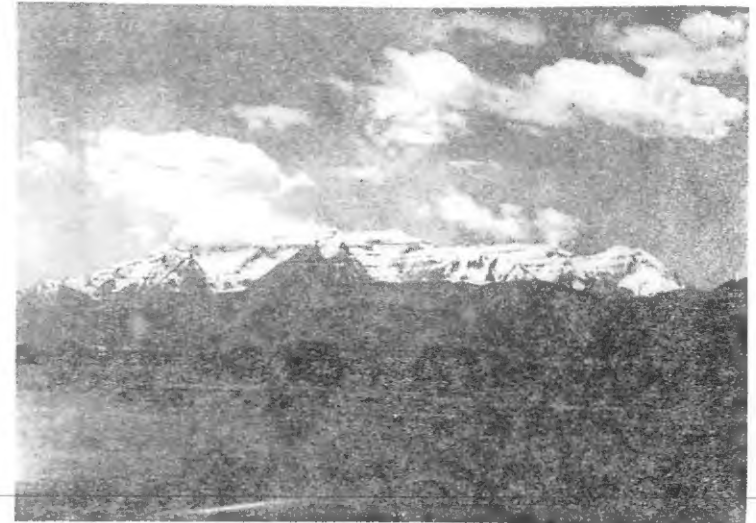
in the sheep industry.<sup>7</sup> Other sheepmen were Tom Clotworthy, J. S. Murdock, William and Hugh Coleman, J. W. Clyde, Smith Bros., J. B. Wilson & Sons, and J. S. McDonald & Sons.

Wasatch County for many years has been the center of livestock raising and dairy farming. Dairy farmers today ship milk to Salt Lake City, and sheep cattlemen supply high grade products to many markets.

#### MINING

It was the mining interest sparked by Colonel Patrick Edward Conner and his California volunteers that led to the development of the rich mines in northern Wasatch County. Conner and his men came to Utah in

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 12.



Dairy cattle industry

and then winding them into large balls. Several gunny-sacks of rag balls were required to make an ordinary size carpet. The carpet was woven in yard widths, and then fitted into the rooms and sewn together. The carpet was laid on a matting of fresh straw to make it soft for walking and more wearable. Fortunate indeed were those who could afford a "carpet stretcher" to help tighten the carpet as it was laid. The few in Heber who did have them were generous in sharing with all the community.

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#### DAIRYING

Dairying in the valley began with individuals who owned one or two cows and would sell their surplus milk or dairy products to neighbors. Later, creameries were established to collect the milk and distribute it on a large scale. Three such creameries have existed in Heber. One,

1008 — Sheep Street, Heber City

on this street were:

H. Clay Cummings Home & Family  
& 4 Sons

Joseph R. Murdock Home & Family  
The Sheep Loading docks of the  
Heber Creeper



Stock  
yards

5<sup>th</sup> West

4<sup>th</sup> West

3<sup>rd</sup> West

2<sup>nd</sup> West

1<sup>st</sup> West

Main Street Heber City Utah

1<sup>st</sup> South = Midway Lane = Sheep Street

Center Street Heber City, Utah

Sheep Street - Heber Utah =  
100 South, because:

1. Sheep Corrals and Heber  
Creepers loading skates were  
on 100 South

2. Henry Clay Cummings &  
Sons lived at 288 West 100 So.

3. David A Broadbent  
lived at West 100 So